

Testimony of Corinne Gworek
Connecticut General Assembly
Judiciary Committee
March 19, 2012

Good Afternoon, Chairman Coleman, Chairman Fox, and Committee members.

My name is Corinne Gworek. I come before you today to speak in favor of Bill 5504, An Act Concerning Commercial Sexual Exploitation of a Minor.

As a mother of a young child and a resident of Simsbury, Connecticut, I was stunned to learn of a prostitution arrest in Simsbury on November 13th, 2011. On that day, a hotel operator in our town noticed several men entering one particular room in his establishment. He immediately notified law enforcement.

After initial investigations, a Simsbury detective went into Room 222 of the hotel posing as a customer, and agreed to pay a price for sexual activity there.

After the woman took the money, the police arrested two people on charges of prostitution and promoting prostitution. It was later learned that one of these people had already been arrested for promoting prostitution of a girl who was less than eleven years old.

This all took place less than a mile from my home and less than a quarter of a mile from the Simsbury Police Station.

It was also the first known prostitution arrest in Simsbury's 300 year history. And it was a direct result of "Escort" advertisements on Backpage.com. Because of these ads, which began running in the Connecticut section of Backpage just days before the arrest in Simsbury, every town in Connecticut now faces increased exposure to this crime.

More disturbing is the fact that our young people may be victimized by these "Escort" ads. Whether in print through the Hartford, New Haven, and Fairfield Advocates, or online through sites like Backpage.com, these ads are creating an ever increasing demand for victims of commercial sexual exploitation, a form of human trafficking so prevalent in Connecticut.

I urge passage of this bill to protect our children and *ALL* victims of human trafficking.

Thank you.